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24 May 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion of Proposed Technical Institute
in Southeast Asia

1. At a meeting in the offices of SRS on 23 May 1957, the
proposal of a technical institute in Southeast Asia was discussed
with [REDACTED] of IO/DDP. Present were [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] of SRS.

25X1A9a 2. [REDACTED] stated at the beginning that SRS believed that
the combatting of Communism, in long range terms, depended upon
political stability, economic advancement, and general social
progress in vulnerable areas like Southeast Asia. The idea of a
technical institute, first suggested by [REDACTED] arose out of 25X1A9a
this approach to the problem. The institute was conceived as a
place to train young Asians in practical arts required for the develop-
ment of their countries. Private American support, probably by
foundations, was envisaged but no U. S. Government control or
direction. A location in South Vietnam was chosen, among other
reasons, as a way of giving recognition to a country which was suc-
cessfully resisting Communist pressure and making progress toward
the establishment of a democratic order. The name, Abraham Lin-
coln Institute, was suggested, [REDACTED] explained, with a view to
capitalizing upon Lincoln's appeal to the colored races and to match-
ing the personalized symbols which had been effectively employed by
the Communists.

25X1A9a 3. [REDACTED] said that the approach to the Communist
problem outlined by [REDACTED] was one with which he agreed and
that the suggested institute seemed an appropriate means of further-
ing a general program in the area. The principal obstacle to real-
ization, he thought, would be that of obtaining the cooperation of the
governments of the Southeast Asian countries. His experience to
date had not been very encouraging. He explained some of the pro-
jects for cooperation in educational matters with which he was
acquainted. A discussion ensued of a number of practical problems
which would probably be encountered in attempting to found an insti-
tute like that proposed.

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25X1A5a1 3. 25X1A9a agreed that the idea was worth discussing with [REDACTED] when he comes to Washington, and he will arrange an appointment with [REDACTED]. He also suggested discussing the proposal with [REDACTED] who is currently considering various ideas gathered by the Director while visiting the area. 25X1A9a

25X1A9a

[REDACTED]
SRS/DDI

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